Starflower Native Plant of the Month posters feature color images and text designed to introduce community members to Pacific Northwest native plants. Beyond simple identification, these posters share interesting plant facts and provide suggestions for incorporating native plants into home landscapes.

Native Plant of the Month posters spring from an expressed desire of community groups undertaking habitat restoration projects. These groups recognized the education potential of their restoration activities and sought engaging materials to teach visitors about native plants and thereby spark an interest in habitat restoration. They also wanted to capitalize on this interest to increase the number of volunteers working on their project and to encourage visitors to initiate their own restoration projects.

Originally created by Starflower Foundation for display at kiosks or shelters near the restoration site, these sixty posters are readily printed and reproduced and lend themselves to weekly, monthly, or seasonally rotating display. Naturalists and stewards of native plant landscapes can also effectively use Native Plant of the Month posters to actively involve children and adults in the long-term stewardship of native habitat.

Starflower Foundation is pleased to have supported the development and use of these materials in native plant habitats at Seattle public parks (Colman, Frink, Genesee, Greg Davis, Madrona Woods, Magnuson, Mee Kwa Mooks, Pritchard Beach, Roxhill, and Seward), and in native plant gardens and restoration projects at Seattle schools (Dearborn, Dunlap, Hawthorne, NW Montessori, Pathfinder, Roxhill, and Sanislo Elementary schools and Washington Middle School) and at the Environmental and Adventure School in Kirkland.
Native Plant of the Month Posters

Native Plant of the Month posters are a handy tool to engage neighbors and visitors in on-going restoration projects. Focused on our Pacific Northwest native plants, these sixty, 8 1/2” x 11”, color posters are perfect for display in monthly or seasonal rotations at kiosks or similar locations. The posters help visitors

- Identify specific native plants
- Create name associations through interesting facts
- Consider ways to incorporate these plants in their landscapes
- Educate and inspire the public about native plants, hopefully leading them to active participation in restoration projects.

Featuring selected native plants at various times of the year, images designate unique characteristics helpful in identifying the plants. In addition, each poster contains two text sections. One provides brief notes, helpful on site, about the plant’s, unique features, habitat value, identification characteristics, and scientific and common name. The other provides a “take-home message”, by briefly discussing the plant’s landscape value and suggesting how it could be used in a Pacific Northwest native plant landscape.

Groups stewarding habitat restoration projects at parks or elsewhere may find the Native Plant of the Month Posters especially useful to:

- Provide the general public an opportunity to learn about some of the native plants they are likely to notice during their park visits
- Create interest in park stewardship by helping park users appreciate native plants
- Provide a highly visible educational program that may lead visitors to take advantage of other educational outreach opportunities
- Supplement other Pacific Northwest native plant education materials and programs.

Starflower Foundation is pleased to have supported the development and use of these materials in native plant habitats at Seattle public parks (Colman, Frink, Genesee, Greg Davis, Madrona Woods, Magnuson, Mee Kwa Mooks, Pritchard Beach, Roxhill, and Seward) and native plant gardens at Seattle schools (Dearborn and Hawthorne Elementary schools).

Native Plant of the Month posters may be freely duplicated for educational purposes - not for sale. Native Plant of the Month Posters may be downloaded and printed individually from www.wnps.org. The files are intended for color printing, preferably using a laser printer to obtain the highest quality prints. Laminating the posters is recommended for long-term use in the field.
Native Plant of the Month Posters
Project Development

The People Who Made this Possible:

Ann Lennartz - Founder and President, Starflower Foundation

Sandy Fry - Director

Heidi Bohan - Education Materials Development Contractor/Project Lead, activity development, prototype activities, text and graphics

James A. Kolb - Education Consultant, education program guidance, oversight, and material review

Starflower Staff -
Chris Behrens, Megan MacClellan, Jeremy Valenta, and Cynthia Walker
In Memory of Ann Lennartz

Starflower Foundation was founded in 1996 by Ann Lennartz with the mission of assisting with the creation, rehabilitation and stewardship of Pacific Northwest native plant communities by supporting citizen-driven restoration and education projects that inspire understanding, appreciation and preservation of Pacific Northwest native ecosystems, with humans as an integral part of these ecosystems. Having met the founder’s expectations, Starflower Foundation ceased operations in December 2007. As part of the foundation’s legacy, we have made our learnings and education materials available through the Washington Native Plant Society website at www.wnps.org.

Over its 10-year history, the foundation worked on 18 urban habitat restoration projects in Seattle, Washington. A core of committed volunteers was at the center of each project with the vision of restoring an area of their neighborhood park or school grounds with Pacific Northwest native plant communities. As an operating foundation, Starflower supported design, implementation, and maintenance for these projects. During all phases of the projects, the foundation pursued a restoration strategy to fast-track the successional process and strove for a high level of native plant species diversity.

As envisioned by Ann, each project Starflower Foundation worked on included a significant educational component. These Native Plant of the Month Posters were created to actively involve community members, students, teachers, and project stewards in the long-term stewardship of the projects and to promote Pacific Northwest native plant landscapes and stewardship. Valuable feedback from the broad stewardship community shaped these activities and demonstrated their value.
Native Plant of the Month Posters

*Click on a plant name to view its poster*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Names</th>
<th>Scientific Names</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alder, Red - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Alnus rubra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asters, Native - Summer</td>
<td>Aster species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birch, Paper - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td>Betula papyrifera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleeding Heart - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td>Dicentra formosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-eyed-grass - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Sisrinchium douglasii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bog- Laurel, Western - Spring</td>
<td>Kamia microphylla</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camas, Common - Spring</td>
<td>Camassia quamash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cedar, Western Red - Winter</td>
<td>Thuja plicata</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cranberry, Highbush - Fall</td>
<td>Viburnum edule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devil's Club - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td>Oplopanax horridum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dewberry - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td>Rubus ursinus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dogwood, Pacific - Spring</td>
<td>Cornus nutallii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogwood, Red Osier - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Cornus stolonifera (also scericea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elderberry, Red - Spring</td>
<td>Sambucus racemosa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farewell-to-Spring - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td>Clarkia amoena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fern, Bracken - Fall &amp; Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Pteridium aquilinum</td>
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<td>Fern, Deer - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fir, Douglas - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
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<td>Goat’sbeard - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goldenrod, Canada - Summer</td>
<td>Solidago Canadensis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gumweed, Entire-leaved - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td>Grindelia integrifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huckleberry, Evergreen - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td>Corylus cornuta var. californica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian Plum - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td>Equisetum arvense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian Plum - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Vaccinium ovatum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinnikininnick - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Oemleria cerasiformis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily, Fawn - Spring</td>
<td>Oemleria cerasiformis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lupine, Fawn - Spring</td>
<td>Aracostaphylos ursi-ursi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lupine, Arctic - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td>Erythronium oregonum</td>
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<td>Madrone, Pacific - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td>Lupinus arcticus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maple, Big Leaf - Fall</td>
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<td>Maple, Big-Leaf - Spring</td>
<td>Acer macrophyllum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maple, Vine - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td>Acer macrophyllum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maple, Vine - Spring</td>
<td>Acer circinatum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marsh Marigold, Yellow - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td>Acer circinatum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mock Orange - Summer</td>
<td>Caltha palustris var. asarifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nettle, Cooley’s Hedge - Summer</td>
<td>Philadelphus lewisii</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nootka Rose - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td>Stachys cooleyae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nootka Rose - Summer</td>
<td>Rosa nutkana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceanspray - Summer</td>
<td>Rosa nutkana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holodiscus discolor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Native Plant of the Month Posters

*Click on a plantname to view its poster*

#### Common Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Grape, Tall - Spring</td>
<td><em>Mahonia aquifolium</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Grape, Tall - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td><em>Mahonia aquifolium</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearly Everlasting - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td><em>Anaphalis margaritacea</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Flowering Currant - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td><em>Ribes sanguineum</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Salmonberry - Spring</td>
<td><em>Rubus spectabilis</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Serviceberry - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td><em>Amelanchier alnifolia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siberian Miner’s-Lettuce - Spring</td>
<td><em>Claytonia (or Montia) sibirica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk Tassel Bush - Winter &amp; Spring</td>
<td><em>Garrya elliptica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slough Sedge - Summer &amp; Fall</td>
<td><em>Carex obnupta</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Snowberry - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td><em>Symphoricarpos albus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Swamp Lantern - Spring</td>
<td><em>Lysichiton americanus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweet Gale - Fall</td>
<td><em>Myrica gale</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thimbleberry - Spring &amp; Summer</td>
<td><em>Rubus parviflorus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trillium - Spring</td>
<td><em>Trillium ovatum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violets, Native Wild - Spring</td>
<td><em>Viola species</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Parsley, Pacific - Spring</td>
<td><em>Oenanthe sarmentosa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Sorrel - Fall &amp; Winter</td>
<td><em>Oxalis oregana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarrow - Summer</td>
<td><em>Achillea millefolium</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Native Plant of the Month

Red Alder
Alnus rubra

- When the inner bark is exposed to air it turns a bright red. This is the likely reason for both its scientific and common names.
- Red alder has catkins and “cones” on the same tree in the winter making it easy to identify. The cone is actually the female catkin and produces the seed.
- Flocks of native birds depend on the quantities of seed it produces in midwinter.
- The trunk is host to patches of white lichens.
- Native people used the bark for a rich red-orange dye, as well as for medicine; and the wood for carving and smoking salmon.

Landscape Value

Red alder is a true Northwest native and, though not typically planted in landscapes, will quite often occur naturally in Seattle landscapes. It is fast growing and improves the soil by “fixing” nitrogen from the air into the soil, thereby playing a vital role in rejuvenating disturbed land.

Red alder usually grows in groves and can be planted (or allowed to naturalize) in groups or in rows where the white patches on its bark often cause it to be mistaken for paper birch. Use it for a fast growing screen, or to reclaim disturbed sites, in wet to dry soils. Native wildlife will thrive in the habitat created. Plant with an understory of ferns, native shrubs and woodland flowers.

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Native Plant of the Month

Native Asters

Aster chilensis, subspicatus, modestus, eatonii and foliaceus

• Aster is the Greek name for “star,” describing the appearance of the flower.
• These species have been planted in many Seattle habitat restoration projects. There are dozens of additional native species.
• These late-blooming flowers attract bees, butterflies, and moths after most other flowers are gone.
• Asters are best distinguished from similar plants by the seasons in which they flower (late summer through fall for asters).
• Layers of bracts located at the base of the flowers help to identify asters.

Landscape Value

These perennial wildflowers are colorful additions to large flower borders, naturalized meadows, and sunny edge zones.

Asters like full sun, and prefer moist soil, but can tolerate a wide range of soils. They will self seed freely once established.

Our native asters generally bloom in shades of blue, purple, lavender, pink, and occasionally white, with mostly yellow centers.

Plant with other flowering perennials such as pearly everlasting, Erigeron, tufted hairgrass, red fescue, lupine, Potentilla, Clarkia and goldenrod for a long season of bloom.

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Native Plant of the Month

Bleeding Heart

*Dicentra formosa*

- The heart shape of the flowers gives rise to the common name. "Formosa" means "beautiful, handsome, well-formed" which is a good description of this pleasing woodland plant.
- Flowers are pollinated by our native bumblebee and visited by hummingbirds.
- Seeds are attractive to ants which help to disperse the seed in the forest duff.
- The rhizome was used by native people to help ease the pain of a toothache, and also as a hair rinse.

Landscape Value

Bleeding heart is highly adaptable and tough, with lacy foliage and unique, dainty flowers.

Spreading by underground rhizomes, it quickly forms masses that offer early spring bloom and often blooms again in early fall.

Bleeding heart will take sun or shade, preferring the light shade of woodland borders and perennial beds. A similar species, *D. spectabilis*, is an import from Asia with taller erect growth.

Mix with other woodland groundcovers such as Siberian miner’s-lettuce, false lily of the valley, star-flowered false Solomon’s seal, and *Corydalis* for a charming fairyland groundcover.

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Native Plant of the Month

Blue-eyed-grass
Also called Satin-flower
*Sisyrinchium douglasii*

- In a slight breeze, the pink-purple flowers seem to have "eyes" that wink, and the petals have a satiny sheen, hence its common names.
- This species is named after early explorer and botanist David Douglas (1798-1834).
- More iris-like than grass-like, this plant is in the iris family.
- One of our first spring flowers, look for blooms as early as February.

Landscape Value

Blue-eyed-grass adds colorful interest to informal plantings where the ground is wet in spring and dry in summer. These plants do well in rock gardens, by a pond, along paths, and in pots.

Blue-eyed-grass is easy to grow and available as rhizomes, seeds or plants through bulb suppliers and nurseries. Plant in drifts for best effect.

Each flower opens only for a day; but since there are several per stem, the blooming period may last for weeks. Plant with other native grasses and meadow wildflowers.

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Native Plant of the Month

Bracken Fern
Pteridium aquilinum

• This plant grows throughout the northern temperate zone and is considered the world’s most widespread fern.
• The early shoots in spring are browsed heavily by deer, elk, bears, and other animals.
• A colonizing plant, bracken ferns help land to recover after burns, logging, and floods, and play an important role in restoration.

Landscape Value

Most Seattle urban gardeners will likely scoff at any suggestion that bracken fern fits under this heading. Its underground rhizomes are deep and persistent and very difficult to eradicate from where it is not welcome, making it a bane for many.

However, “if you can’t beat them, join them” may apply with this important native species, and one might consider letting this plant find a spot to thrive in the naturalized landscape, along with its close ally, horsetail. It creates a mass of tropical-sized leaves, turns golden-brown in winter and is a food source for many native animal species. Allow it to grow in back lots, wet corners, and in the forest understory.
Native Plant of the Month

Canada Goldenrod
Solidago Canadensis

- This ancient medicinal herb is named “solidago” meaning “make whole” or “cure” in Latin.
- Goldenrod ranges throughout North America, though named for its occurrence in Canada. It is the state flower of Nebraska and Kentucky.
- The golden flower stalks are important food for butterflies, bees, and other nectar-loving insects. The seed provides winter food for wildlife.
- Goldenrod is traditionally used in teas and other preparations. It is also used to dye wool a golden-yellow.

Landscape Value
An attractive landscape perennial, several garden cultivars of Canada goldenrod are available. The golden flower spikes form in early summer and bloom through September.

Goldenrod grows in colonies from rhizomes and spreads easily by seed. Our native species can grow 3-4’ high making it a good plant for the back of the perennial border or in mass.

This sun-loving plant is a good addition to butterfly gardens and naturalized meadows. Grow in a wild garden with other native perennials such as bluebells, rosebay willow herb, yarrow, hedge nettle, pearly everlasting, penstemon, lupine, Erigeron, asters, tufted hairgrass, Roemer’s fescue, and sedges.

Flowers become seedheads that persist.
**Native Plant of the Month**

**Common Camas**

*Camassia quamash*

- Lewis & Clark recorded camas in their journals as “quawmash,” a native name now applied to its scientific name.
- They wrote: “The quawmash is now in blume and from the color of its blume at a short distance it resembles lakes of fine clear water...,” indicating its abundance.
- Only a few remnant patches of this once plentiful plant remain in the Puget Sound area.
- Native people relied on this plant as a primary food source, though the bulbs require special processing to be edible.

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**Landscape Value**

This lily plant prefers wet soil in winter and dry soil in summer, making it ideal for seeps and wet meadows. It thrives in a sunny meadow area with rich soil, and can take the drought conditions of our Northwest summers.

Plant with native grasses such as Roemer’s fescue, junegrass, and tufted hairgrass, and in the company of other herbaceous native plants such as chocolate lily, yarrow, wild hyacinth, nodding onion and wild strawberry. Camas self-seeds readily in natural gardens.

Camas bulbs are widely available from national sources, but look locally for our Washington native varieties.

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*Seedpods in summer.*

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Cooley's Hedge Nettle

Stachys cooleyae

• While leaf shape and arrangement along the stem appear similar to stinging nettle, hedge nettle does not have stingers, and is from an entirely different family.
• The square-shaped stem and strong pungent smell are clues that this is a member of the mint family.
• The flowers are attractive to hummingbirds.
• This species has also been called “Woundwort” and has historically been used as medicine for injuries.

Landscape Value

Cooley’s hedge nettle is a perennial herb that forms stands 2-3’ tall, and blooms from early to late summer. It is a great addition to a hummingbird or naturalized garden.

This plant prefers a moist, partial shade to full sun site, and is ideally planted along the base of a hedge of native shrubs such as red osier dogwood, black hawthorn, thimbleberry, or salmonberry.

Plant in combination with western coltsfoot, cow parsnip, horsetail, goat’sbeard, and ferns for a striking native planting.

Text by Heidi Bohan
©Starflower Foundation
Native Plant of the Month

Red Flowering Currant
Ribes sanguineum

• “Sanguineum” means “blood-red” in Latin, referring to the deep red flowers that arrive in early spring.
• Migratory hummingbirds depend on these early profuse flowers for nectar.
• The berries are edible though not considered a favorite of native people. However, wildlife of all kinds consume them including grouse, pheasants, robins, waxwings, foxes, coyotes, raccoons, and others.
• Elk and deer browse on the twigs and foliage.

Landscape Value

A superb landscape plant, red flowering currant is considered a specimen plant throughout North American and European gardens, where it was introduced in early 1800’s. Plant en masse, as a focal point or as part of naturalized woodland forest planting.

Adaptable to sun and part shade, this plant prefers somewhat drier soils. Plant with evergreen huckleberry, salal, oceanspray, sword fern, deer fern, coastal strawberry, and bleeding heart for year-round interest.

Text by Heidi Bohan
©Starflower Foundation
Deer Fern
*Blechnum spicant*

- Deer and elk rub their sore antler stubs on these fern clumps after their antlers drop in the fall, which helps with healing. They also browse on the foliage during the winter and early spring. These observations provide likely reasons for its common name.
- This fern has two types of fronds: one (that produces spores) is feathery, upright, deciduous and fertile. The other is evergreen, lays flat, and is the primary food producer for the plant.
- This plant has historical uses as an edible and medicinal plant by native people.

**Landscape Value**

Deer fern is an excellent native plant to include in landscapes. Its evergreen nature and low compact form with feathery fronds, make it a specimen fern to include in shaded areas. The new red fiddleheads add seasonal interest in spring.

It thrives in partial to deep shade and once established will tolerate the dry conditions that are present under the forest canopy.

Plant *en masse* or mix with other groundcovers. Deer fern naturally occurs with woodland plants such as bleeding heart, false lily-of-the-valley, starflower, Solomon’s seal, trillium, foamflower, piggyback, fringecup, dewberry, Siberian miner’s-lettuce, and many others.
**Native Plant of the Month**

**Devil's Club**  
*Oplopanax horridum*

- The common name on this plant focuses on the fact that the thorny stems can cause grief to unwary hikers, especially in winter when the stalks (clubs) are bare and buds look a bit like devils' horns.
- In every other way, this plant is a superior native plant with its exotic form, reminiscent of ancient forests, and berries that are prized by bears and other wildlife.
- This plant is held in high regard by native people who use it for healing medicine, and ceremonially for its protective powers.

**Landscape Value**

Though the thorns are intimidating in a landscape setting, devil's club can be successfully used as a dramatic landscape feature if placed properly. It favors wet seeps and springs: therefore, place it near water features or wet areas, out of reach of unwary garden visitors.

Devil's club will give a striking show through the seasons. Bare winter stalks give way to early sprouts, which quickly transform to large prehistoric-appearing leaves. Inconspicuous flowers are followed by beautiful clusters of berries. Finally, in fall, the huge leaves turn a brilliant yellow and fall to earth. It will colonize by underground rhizomes so give it room to grow.
Native Plant of the Month

Dewberry

Rubus ursinus

• Dewberry is also called trailing blackberry because it spreads low across the ground.
• Its delicious berries are a favorite of bear ("ursus"), reflected in its scientific name. Many other wildlife share in the harvest.
• It is our only native blackberry and carefully protected during restoration efforts as it is often confused with non-native blackberries. Look for leaves with three leaflets and trailing stems to help distinguish from the non-native, invasive species.
• It will form thickets in full sun or trail gracefully through the forest understory.

Landscape Value

Dewberry is an often naturalized addition to the native plant landscape, offering an attractive show of flowers in spring, followed by delicious berries in summer (make sure to include a variety of plants to ensure male and female plants).

Plant in full sun to full shade. If planted on a sunny slope it will create a soil binding groundcover. If planted in forest understory it will mix politely with sword fern, deer fern, Oregon grape, salal, and other forest understory plants.

Consider planting it as a groundcover in the berry patch along with evergreen huckleberry, blueberries, serviceberry, strawberry, or other native berries.

Blue-gray to whitish trailing stems and leaves with three leaflets distinguish this from non-native blackberries.

Text by Heidi Bohan
©Starflower Foundation

Photo by Heidi Bohan
Native Plant of the Month

Pacific Dogwood

*Cornus nutallii*

- The word “dogwood” comes from old English *dagge* (dagger) as does “cornus” for *cornu* (a horn), both indicating the use of the wood from the European species of dogwood for tools.
- The fruit is a favorite of many birds, especially the band-tailed pigeon, a fact which James Audubon immortalized in his painting of this bird. Audubon also named this plant after botanist James Nuttall.
- The wood is very hard and used for a variety of implements (such as arrows and handles) by the native people here.

**Landscape Value**

Pacific dogwood is a wonderful landscape plant and grows in close association with native coniferous trees such as Douglas fir and red cedar, and easily intertwines with these, generally growing up 20'- 40' tall.

This plant is in decline in the Seattle area falling prey to an introduced leaf fungus. Avoid injuring the bark to prevent introduction of this fungus.

Pacific dogwood prefers partial shade and to be left in its wild state, thriving in naturalized gardens, forest edges, and woodland glades, with natural rainfall once established.

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Text by Heidi Bohan
©Starflower Foundation
Native Plant of the Month

Douglas Fir
Pseudotsuga menziesii

• This plant has a rich botanical history and honors, by name, two early botanists who first described it: David Douglas and Dr. Archibald Menzies.

• It is not a true fir so its species name describes it as a “false (pseudo) -fir (tsuga).”

• Its cone has unique “mousetail” bracts that help protect the seeds from being devoured by native Douglas squirrels which harvest this cone in earnest as soon as it forms in fall.

• Thick, furrowed bark protects this tree from fire, and provides habitat for native bats which retire in its crevices during the day.

Landscape Value
Reaching maturity in 60-100 years, Douglas fir is our subclimax tree, providing shelter for slower growing climax forest trees such as red cedar and western hemlock. Though not typically planted in landscapes, it is often an existing feature in Seattle area landscapes.

Vine maple, flowering dogwood, serviceberry, oceanspray, western hemlock, and red cedar grow as understory plants. Groundcovers such as sword fern, deer fern, bleeding heart, trillium, foamflower, and fringecup add seasonal beauty.

If a Douglas fir must be cut, consider leaving a snag that will quickly become critical habitat for wildlife.

Text by Heidi Bohan
©Starflower Foundation
Native Plant of the Month

Red Elderberry
*Sambucus racemosa*

- Red elderberry is named for its red clusters of berries. It is closely related to blue elderberry.
- Red elderberries are a favorite food for many birds such as grosbeaks, finches, and robins.
- The foliage is browsed by deer and elk. This plant produces a bitter chemical to protect itself when over-browsed.
- Red elderberry colonizes disturbed areas such as landslides and logging clear-cuts and is part of the early succession of a forest ecology.
- The whole plant is somewhat toxic, and wild red elderberries are best left for the birds.

Landscape Value

Red elderberry is an excellent addition to the landscape. It is especially valuable for the butterfly and wildlife garden as it provides nectar, berries, and foliage for birds, small mammals, butterflies, and their larva.

Its arching pyramidal form works well in the back of a perennial border, or along the edge of woodland forest. In spring it is covered with lilac-shaped blooms and followed by striking clusters of red berries in summer.

Plant red elderberry with tall Oregon grape, oceanspray, mock orange, and Pacific ninebark to create a fine woodland hedgerow.
Farewell-to-Spring  
*Clarkia amoena*

- Full bloom in summer when many other plants are past their flowering stage, Farewell-to-Spring reminds us that the profusion of spring flowers is past.
- Also called “herald-of-summer” or “summer’s darling” for similar reasons.
- A member of the genus named to honor William Clark for a similar native plant, *Clarkia pulchella*, was first gathered along the Lewis & Clark trail. “Amoena” means “charming.”
- Butterflies and bees welcome this flower for its nectar and pollen.

Landscape Value

*Clarkia* is a summer annual that reseeds happily in moist, well-drained soil, and thrives in a full sun site, where moisture remains constant during its early growing season.

Seeds can be directly-sown in fall or spring (seedlings don’t like to be transplanted), and will do best in sandy, unfertilized soil.

Plant *en masse* or mixed with other summer flowering plants such as yarrow, goldenrod, pearly everlasting, and Cooley’s hedge nettle. Add native grasses such as Roemer’s fescue and tufted hairgrass for a meadow. Plant at the edge of flowering shrubs such as mock orange, ocean spray, and serviceberry as a border.
Native Plant of the Month

**Fawn Lily**

*Erythronium oregonum*

- The mottled leaves resemble the spotted skin of a newborn fawn, the most likely reason for its name. Also said to be named for the leaves that appear like the “pricked ears of a fawn.”
- Fawn lily is a native species of the westside lowland forest.
- Tentatively listed as extirpated in Seattle, this species still occurs naturally in eastern King County, and is now being re-introduced in Seattle habitat restoration projects.

_Landscape Value_

Fawn lily is a charming woodland groundcover plant. Most of our *Erythronium* species tend to live in higher elevations but this lily thrives in lowland forests.

Fawn Lily is usually grown from an unusual corm, but can also be propagated from seed. It is easy to cultivate and will increase to form “delightful drifts of their lily-like splendor.”*

Best grown in moist, shady parts of the garden, mixed with mosses, shooting star, and other native *Erythroniums* and lilies.

*Arthur R. Kruckeberg*

Fawn lilies emerge in spring with mottled leaves and create a splendid show with unique lily-like blooms.

Text by Heidi Bohan

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Native Plant of the Month

Goat'sbeard

Aruncus dioicus

“Aruncus” derives from a Greek word aryngos meaning goat’s beard. Goat’sbeard may remind you of the white, fluffy beards of the mountain goats that live in our alpine mountains.

Hummingbirds, mourning cloak butterflies, bumblebees, wasps, and other insects feed on the flowers. Seeds last through winter and provide winter forage for small birds.

Deer and elk feed on the foliage.

There are male and female plants. Male plants have larger, fuller flowers while the female flowers are more arching.

Landscape Value

Goat’sbeard has long been recognized by gardeners as an important landscape plant with several cultivars available.

It is a graceful but tough perennial that grows from rhizomes. The flowers occur in late spring to early summer for long lasting and striking blooms. The arching seedheads provide interest through the fall and winter.

Goat’sbeard prefers to grow in partial to full shade, and is a bright addition to shady places along forest edges, walkways and on moist banks. It often grows in company with lady fern, maidenhair fern, bleeding heart, piggyback, fringecup, and false Solomon’s seal.
Native Plant of the Month

Entire-leaved Gumweed
Also called Resinweed or Gum Plant
Grindelia integrifolia

- The leaves and flowers are “gummy” from a very sticky, white, resinous latex especially abundant around the flower heads.
- “Entire” is a taxonomical term used for leaves that are smooth-edged and not divided, which describes the entire-leaved gumweed’s uppermost leaves.
- Bees and butterflies gather pollen and nectar from this plant.
- The aromatic resin is most abundant during the warm days of late summer often scenting the air with its musky sweet odor.

Landscape Value

Native to wet meadows, salt marshes, and rocky shorelines, entire-leaved gumweed is an herbaceous perennial that grows from a taproot and forms colonies. The yellow flowers bloom from June to November making this a striking wild plant for naturalized areas. It is important to many species of insects and, therefore, insectivorous birds and mammals.

It will tolerate clay soils and is a good choice for reclaiming seashores and disturbed wetland habitats. Plant in sunny meadows along with sedges, tufted hairgrass, lupine, Pacific silverweed, American dunegrass, and beach strawberry.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Beaked Hazelnut
*Corylus cornuta var. californica*

- One of the few nut trees in the Northwest, its common name comes from the sheathing that covers the nut, forming a “beak.” Hazelnuts are also called filberts.
- Beaked hazelnuts are easily recognized in winter because the male catkins cover mature trees. As the season progresses, the catkins extend longer and longer, eventually producing large amounts of golden pollen. This pollinates tiny bright red female flowers.
- The nuts are edible and highly prized by wildlife such as squirrels and large birds.

Landscape Value

A beautiful small tree with arching form, beaked hazelnut is most valuable for the landscape in winter when the charming male catkins provide winter interest. Use as a specimen plant or mixed with other woodland plants.

In summer it is covered with soft furry leaves and provides a graceful backdrop in the landscape. Beaked hazelnut prefers part shade with dryer woodland soil.

“Hazel initiates the rites of spring hereabouts and will be a special omen for those who watch for signs of yearly rebirth.” Arthur R. Kruckeberg—“Gardening with Native Plants”

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Highbush Cranberry

Viburnum edule

While not a cranberry, the tart berries are carried high on the bush, so its common name is at least partly correct.

The berries on this Viburnum plant are indeed edible (though not delicious) as described by its scientific name (edible= edule).

These are favored berries for cedar waxwings, robins, pileated woodpeckers, black bears, and squirrels. As thickets, these shrubs provide cover and forage for other birds and animals.

Bentwood boxes filled with highbush cranberries stored in oil or water were highly valued gifts or trade items by native people.

Landscape Value

Viburnums are highly regarded landscape plants, and this species is no exception. The rounded, tall shrub form, attractive foliage, clusters of flowers in spring, and brightly colored clusters of fruits, along with fall color, make this a prime addition to the native landscape.

This species prefers a shady, moist location in the company of trees such as paper birch, trembling aspen, black cottonwood, Pacific crabapple, and red alder. Plant with other native shrubs such as twinberry, red osier dogwood, snowberry, Nootka rose, and willows. This plant roots well from hardwood cuttings.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Field or Common Horsetail
*Equisetum arvense*

- One of the most widespread plants in the world, it descends from the age of the dinosaurs.
- Horsetail is named for the shape of its leafy, bushy tail-like stalks.
- This was one of the first plants to send green shoots up through the ash of Mt. St. Helens.
- This plant colonizes on poisoned land (such as along railroad tracks) and processes heavy metals in the soil, making the soil compatible for other plants.

Landscape Value

Horsetail is often considered a nuisance weed in most gardens, because its rhizomatous root system makes it difficult to eradicate.

Consider planting (or encourage existing horsetail) to grow as a groundcover under deciduous trees along with flowering shrubs. Horsetail can be an attractive addition to the landscape, especially in difficult places such as rocky slopes or wet areas.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Evergreen Huckleberry

Vaccinium ovatum

- All huckleberries and blueberries are Vaccinium species, along with cranberries. Over a dozen species of huckleberries and blueberries are native to this region.
- Its common name describes its evergreen leaves and fruit.
- Evergreen huckleberry produces clusters of deep blue berries late in the summer that persist well into winter, providing important food for small birds and other animals.
- Native people consider these berries worth traveling far to gather and still value them today as “winter berries.”

Landscape Value

This valued landscape plant is widely used for its tidy evergreen compact form, and year-round attraction. Evergreen huckleberry performs best in partial shade where it will reach 5-6’ in height, though it will tolerate a sunny location where it grows more slowly to 4-5’ tall.

Plant as a hedge or low border, or mix with other woodland or perennial border plants to provide evergreen form.

In spring, this plant will send out new, coppery red growth, and clusters of pink bell-shaped flowers. In fall it will be covered with attractive, blue fruit. Evergreen huckleberry is a must-have in the native plant garden.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Indian-plum
Also called Osoberry
Oemleria cerasiformis

- Indian-plum is the first native shrub to flower in our forest, and its blooming tells us to celebrate the coming of spring.
- “Oso” means bear in Spanish. The berries are a favorite food for bears, foxes, coyotes, and deer.
- Birds such as cedar waxwings and robins also quickly devour the berries.
- Indian-plum’s early spring blooms help to feed Anna’s hummingbirds after a long winter.
- The buds, flowers, and leaves smell like cucumbers when lightly crushed.

Landscape Value

Indian-plum is an excellent shrub for the forest edge and understory with enchanting clusters of white flowers. These soon produce orange berries which turn a deep purple.

There are male and female plants so be sure to plant both to produce berries, though they both have flowers in spring.

By midsummer this plant blends into obscurity as a light-green foliage plant, eventually turning yellow with leaf drop in early fall.

This plant is most attractive grown in groups along sunny to partly shady forest edges with vine maple, oceanspray, red flowering currant, evergreen huckleberry, serviceberry, and Oregon grape for year-round interest.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Kinnikinnick
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

- The common name “kinnikinnick” is taken from a native word for an herbal blend which was burned in ceremony. This plant was one of several plants that were used in this mixture and was given this name.
- The berries (uva is Latin for grape) last through the winter and are used by many animals including bears (Latin: ursa) as described in its scientific name.
- The berries are also edible for humans, though dry and not pleasantly favored, but good to know about as a trail snack or survival food.

Landscape Value

Kinnikinnick is a premier landscape plant used widely as an evergreen groundcover. It is commonly used in commercial plantings such as parking lots and industrial areas because of its toughness, once established.

This plant thrives in sunny, well-drained areas, and is especially useful on slopes, islands, and sidewalk strips. It spreads by runners, though easily maintained, and can make an attractive cascading form on rockery.

Plant en masse or mixed with other sun-loving northwest natives such as wax myrtle, penstemon, Pacific silverweed, oceanspray, Oregon grape, silk tassel bush, ground juniper, and garry oak.

Text by Heidi Bohan
For more information contact
Starflower Foundation: 206-789-0263
**Native Plant of the Month**

**Arctic Lupine**  
*Lupinus arcticus*

- The name lupine is known around the world for the beautiful spires of pea-like flowers that brighten spring and summer meadows.
- Though the pods are pea-like they are not edible and may be toxic to humans.
- Bumblebees and hummingbirds feed on the flower nectar, while birds and mammals of all types relish the seeds.

**Landscape Value**

This is one of the many native lupines that occur naturally in our region. Found in high meadows in the Cascade Range, it is adaptable to many elevations including the lowlands of Puget Sound. Consider planting this in a sunny, moist site in your garden.

Lupine plants help to “fix” nitrogen from the air into the soil, enriching poor soils, which gives lupine added garden value.

Mix with monkey-flower, Indian paintbrush, camas, and other wetland meadow plants for a showy long blooming meadow. These meadows are beautiful and have enormous wildlife value.
Big-leaf Maple

*Acer macrophyllum*

- Big-leaf maple leaves can be as large as a foot across, certainly qualifying it for its common and scientific name (macro= large + phyllum= leaf).
- This is one of the most important deciduous trees in our ecosystem, providing habitat for wildlife of all kinds, and as a key plant in the succession from disturbed land to forests.
- The hard, dense wood is desirable for woodworking of all kinds. Historically, it was used by native people for canoe paddles, spindle whorls, serving platters, food ladles, mallets, and other useful implements.

Landscape Value

A fast-growing, large tree, big-leaf maple is not typically planted in landscapes, but the airborne seeds often plant themselves. They can make a wonderful addition to a large yard providing summer shade, and a great home for tree forts and rope swings.

Allow to grow as a specimen tree surrounded by groundcovers or lawn, or grow in a woodland edge with western hemlock and red cedar.

In early spring this tree is adorned with white-green flower clusters, which transform into the well-known winged-seed ‘helicopters’ that fly through the air in fall breezes. The leaves change to bright yellows in fall, eventually becoming piles of leaves excellent for garden mulch.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

**Vine Maple**

*Acer circinatum*

- This maple often has a "vine-like" appearance as it works its way through the forest understory and may even lay along the ground as it reaches towards the sun.
- Its strong, yet flexible, branches make it ideal for basket rims, snowshoes, and strong bows which were favored uses of this plant by native people in this region.
- The winged nutlets persist on the tree and are sought after by evening grosbeaks, nut-hatches, chickadees and Douglas squirrels during the long winter months.

**Landscape Value**

This is one of the premier landscape plants for the Northwest gardener. It is widely adaptable to sun or shade, and will grow in compact form in the sun, or be more open and spreading in the shade.

Hanging, red flower clusters in spring, change to red-green, then to brown winged nutlets which adorn the tree. Deciduous leaves unfold in spring, cover the tree in summer and change to brilliant reds and yellows in the fall.

Grow in a moist, woodland garden along with native conifers, Madrone, red alder, paper birch, hazelnut, serviceberry, Indian plum, salal, Oregon grape, sword fern, lady fern and deer fern.
Siberian Miner's-Lettuce
Also called Candy Flower
Claytonia (or Montia) sibirica

- An early flowering annual covered with white and pink “candy-striped” flowers.
- A widespread native plant that is easily identified by its lance to egg-shaped leaves arranged on opposite sides of the stem, one of our few common annuals.
- The leaves and flowers are highly edible and make a delicious wild spring salad.
- Siberian miner's-lettuce is closely related to common miner's-lettuce (Claytonia perfoliata) which has round leaves that wrap around the stem.

Landscape Value

This is an easy-to-grow self-sowing annual plant, best planted en masse with later blooming perennials or grasses to follow, such as foamflower and tufted hairgrass, or mixed sparingly with other early blooming forest groundcover plants such as bleeding heart, false lily of the valley, star-flowered false Solomon's seal, piggyback and native violets.

Siberian miner's-lettuce prefers a rich moist soil in the under-story or edges of forests. After flowering it can become leggy and unattractive as it returns to the earth so it is advisable to mix with other groundcovers to follow.
Native Plant of the Month

Mock Orange
*Philadelphus lewisii*

- The large, four-petaled, sweet scented flowers are similar to orange blossoms and so provides its common name.
- Meriwether Lewis collected this plant during the Voyage of Discovery. The Voyage’s herbarium collection was brought to Philadelphia where it was studied and named in honor of Lewis.
- Bees, butterflies, and other nectar-loving creatures flock to this plant during its bloom in early summer.
- The hard dense wood was used by native people for arrows and other tools. The leaves and flowers were used as a soap.

Landscape Value

Mock orange, a member of the Hydrangea family, is now a well-known ornamental worldwide. Its attractive form and leaves provide a strong foundation for its profuse display of scented flowers in summer. The flowers are followed by unusual seed capsules.

This deciduous shrub loves a full sun position though it will tolerate partial shade. Its range includes eastern Washington, Idaho, and Montana where it grows along rivers and creeks.

Plant in the company of serviceberry, oceanspray, Ceanothus, wild rose, red flowering currant, and wax myrtle for a beautiful shrub hedgerow. Underplant with perennials such as farewell-to-spring, yarrow, lupine, and goldenrod.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Oceanspray
Holodiscus discolor

- The plumes of white flowers that cover this plant bring to mind the spray from an ocean wave.
- Insects feed and find shelter in this shrub attracting insect-eating birds such as chickadees and bushtits.
- Oceanspray foliage is important food for the larvae of swallowtail, brown elfin, admiral, and spring azure butterflies.
- Thickets provide cover for nesting birds.
- The long straight branches were historically used for arrows, cooking tongs, mat-making needles, and other tools.

Landscape Value

Oceanspray is a graceful and attractive plant to add to most landscapes. The long arching branches on 6-12” tall plants have fine form throughout the year. Early summer brings on a blanket of white plumed flowers. The foliage is attractive, and the seed plumes persist through winter adding interest to the landscape.

Oceanspray thrives in a full sun to part-shade border or forest edge and is adaptable to a wide range of conditions.

Plant oceanspray with mock orange, red flowering currant, serviceberry, red osier dogwood, hawthorn, and vine maple for a mixed hedge ideal for wildlife.

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Native Plant of the Month

Tall Oregon Grape

Mahonia aquifolium

- The state flower of Oregon, the berries grow in grape-like clusters and are edible, though sweet-sour, and have been used for wine, juice, and jam; hence the common name.
- Tall Oregon grape was collected by Lewis & Clark while in Oregon, and studied by Dr. Mahone (who is recognized in the scientific name) upon their return. “Aquifolium” (water leaf) refers to the shiny leaves.
- The bright yellow inner bark is highly medicinal and also used by native people as a strong yellow dye.

Landscape Value

Tall Oregon grape is one of three Mahonia species native to Washington. This particular species is valued worldwide in landscapes for its evergreen, erect, dense form and attractive clusters of yellow flowers, closely followed by attractive, edible blue berries.

Its holly-like leaves (though not holly which is a non-native) make this plant valuable as a barrier plant under windows, along fences and in parking lots. It is also good in mixed borders, islands, and woodland edges.

Wildlife use this plant through all the seasons for its nectar, berries, and protection.
Native Plant of the Month

Pacific Madrone

*Arbutus menziesii*

- The Spanish word “madrono” and the Latin word “arbutus” both mean “strawberry tree.” This reflects the color, shape, and texture of the madrone fruit.
- This is one of the few native, evergreen broadleaf trees in our forests. The thick, shiny leaves persist through winter.
- The berries, foliage, and flowers are important wildlife food for many birds, bees, and butterfly and moth larva.
- Seattle folklore has it that the Magnolia area was intended to be named for the abundant madrone but was misnamed for the magnolia tree.

Landscape Value

Pacific Madrone is a stunning tree in a naturalized planting. The beautifully patterned cinnamon-red bark and the form of the trunk are striking in any season. The evergreen leaves, flowers, and fruit add beauty and attract wildlife throughout the year.

It is best to transplant young seedlings in a well-drained site near the sunny south or west-facing edge of a clearing, especially near Douglas fir. This plant "litters" its bark and leaves so allow room for shedding. Plant sturdy understory plants such as salal, snowberry, Oregon grape, coastal strawberry, sword fern, and kinnikinnik.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Pacific Water-parsley
*Oenanthe sarmentosa*

- Pacific water-parsley thrives in wet places and has leaves that are similar in appearance to parsley; hence its common name.
- Pacific water-parsley develops colonies with strong rhizomatous root systems that help to hold the soil in place in wet areas.

Landscape Value

Pacific water-parsley is a common wild plant in wet seeps and along small creeks in native forests. Insignificant white flowers appear in very early spring and are followed by a mass of growth through summer, which dies back in winter.

A good choice for partial to full shade wetland ponds or creeks, Pacific water-parsley provides critical breeding habitat for amphibians including our Northwestern salamander and the threatened red-legged frog.

Grows easily with slough sedge, yellow pond-lily, water smartweed, buckbean, cotton grass, spike-rush, and many other wetland sedges and rushes.
Native Plant of the Month

Paper Birch

Betula papyrifera

• Paper birch is named for the paper thin layers that peel away from its white bark. These thin layers have been used historically as writing parchment. Its scientific name simply repeats the common name in Latin.
• The catkins are a major food source for several species of birds. It is common to observe flocks of pine siskins moving quickly through the canopy as they feed in winter.
• The layers of bark have traditionally been used by tribes throughout North America for making containers, canoes, and other useful objects.

Landscape Value

Paper birch is a common and useful deciduous landscape tree which makes a striking show in clumps, woodlands or tight places. This plant will fit neatly in narrow sidewalk strips or near buildings, where it will tolerate pruning if needed.

The striking white bark, attractive foliage, yellow fall color, and decorative catkins in winter make this a plant with year-round landscape interest.

Plant in a sunny spot in the company of red osier dogwood, red flowering currant, mock orange, oceanspray, serviceberry, Oregon grape, wax myrtle, deer fern, bleeding heart, and woodland strawberry.

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Native Plant of the Month

Pearly Everlasting
Anaphalis margaritacea

• The flowers bloom in midsummer and leave behind “pearly-white” dry bracts which retain their color and shape for months.
• “Margaritacea” derives from a Greek work that means “a pearl.”
• The flowers attract pollinators such as syrphid flies, small wasps, and butterflies.
• The caterpillars of painted lady butterflies feed on the foliage.
• The foliage and young flowers have been used for healing throughout North America, and now Europe, where it has naturalized.

Landscape Value

Pearly everlasting is a drought-tolerant plant that creates clumps which die back each winter and return each spring to grow 1-3’ tall. By midsummer they are covered with clusters of white flowers which last through fall.

These are sturdy, reliable plants to include in sunny wildflower gardens where they provide critical habitat for native butterflies.

Plant with other sun-loving plants such as goldenrod, Oregon sunshine, lupine, farewell-to-spring, yarrow, bluebells and asters for a colorful perennial butterfly garden.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Red Osier Dogwood
Cornus stolonifera (also scericea)

• “Osier” comes from the French/Gaulish word that means “riverbed,” which is prime habitat for this plant. “Osier” is also the word used for the long flexible branches used in wicker basketry.

• There are three types of dogwoods that grow in our area: a groundcover, a flowering tree, and this attractive shrub.

• The berries are important food for many birds and, though bitter, were also eaten by Native Americans.

• Red osier dogwood thickets provide nest sites and cover for many songbirds.

Landscape Value

Red osier dogwood is an important medium-sized shrub used extensively in naturalized landscapes. The red branches in winter provide important winter interest. The umbels of white flowers in spring are followed by clusters of white to blue berries.

This plant is most successful in a sunny, rich, moist garden soil. Place it behind the perennial border, plant en masse or mix it with other native plants such as snowberry, mock orange, red elderberry, thimbleberry, tall Oregon grape, paper birch and red cedar for year round interest. Trim back to old wood every few years to encourage new red growth.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Nootka Rose
*Rosa nutkana*

- Nootka rose is one of many species of wild roses that grow in the Pacific Northwest.
- Fragrant flowers provide nectar for bees and butterflies, and pleasure for people.
- The fruit is called a “rose hip” and is a favorite food for birds, hares, chipmunks, rabbits, deer, elk, coyotes, and bears.
- The hips are high in Vitamin C and used in teas.
- Rose leaves are important food for morning cloak butterfly larva. The leaf cutter bee cuts little circles from leaves to make its nests.
- Rose thickets are critical habitat for nesting birds and small animals.

Landscape Value

Wild rose species are an excellent addition to any landscape and are especially suited for creating naturalized thickets along banks and in the back of a perennial border. Nootka rose will thrive in full sun or partial shade. Thickets usually reach about 6' tall and will spread readily by underground rhizomes.

The flowers arrive in early summer and leave behind attractive orange-red hips that will last through the winter. Our native rose will easily naturalize and endure the drought of summer and cold of winter.

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Native Plant of the Month

Salmonberry
Rubus spectabilis

- Salmonberry is one of the Northwest’s great harbingers of spring, calling home hummingbirds from their southern migrations to feed on the nectar from its spectacular (“spectabilis”) flowers. Wear this color to attract hummingbirds on your walks.
- Salmonberry is named for its seasonal and physical relation to salmon; its berries ripen at the time of the spring salmon runs, and its berries are reminiscent of salmon eggs.
- The yellow to red-colored berries are a favorite of baby robins as their parents carry these colorful feasts to their nest.

Landscape Value

This unique Northwest native is not typically planted in landscapes as it has a reputation for uncontrollable spreading by underground rhizomes. However, this growth habit may make salmonberry ideal for situations where a thicket is desirable such as in a back woodland natural area or forest edge.

Salmonberry may be planted in moist to dry, partial to full sun situations. Plant in groups with thimbleberry and vine maple, deer fern, sword fern and salal; and edge with groundcovers of piggyback, bleeding heart, fringecup and false lily of the valley. This plant has excellent wildlife and aesthetic value and is worth fitting into a native wildlife landscape.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Serviceberry

Also Sarvisberry, Juneberry and Saskatoon

Amelanchier alnifolia

- Its numerous common names indicate its wide distribution in North America.
- The names “Service” and “Sarvis” are most likely mutations of its previous classification in the *Sorbus* genus.
- “Juneberry” indicates the month the berries ripen. “Saskatoon” is derived from a Blackfoot name for this berry, *mis-as-k-a-tomina*.
- Tribes throughout its range used this plant for its sweet berries and hard wood.
- Deer and elk browse on its foliage and many birds feed on the berries.

Native Plant of the Month

Landscape Value

Serviceberry grows as a shrub or small tree with beautiful flowers in spring, and clusters of berries in summer. The leaves are dark and attractive. This is a good plant for the back of a planting and along forest edge zones.

Its fruit is so tasty it can be planted as part of a berry garden along with blueberries, currants, raspberries, and blue elderberry. It thrives in sun to part shade and is drought tolerant.

Serviceberry has a long history of horticultural use and there are many cultivars available. The Center for Urban Horticulture at UW has an experimental display garden of many of these cultivars.
Silk Tassel Bush
*Garrya elliptica*

- The silvery-cream, 6”-12” male catkins give this plant its common name.
- Female plants have shorter tassels and produce the seed.
- The evergreen leaves emit a sweet, spicy odor when crushed.
- The silky tassels produce silky-woolly fruit that attracts birds such as robins.
- This early successional species often appears after fire as seed dormancy is broken by heat.
- Silk tassel bushes fix nitrogen in the soil.

Landscape Value

A highly prized evergreen shrub, silk tassel bush has a glorious display of catkins in late winter and attractive scented foliage.

Silk tassel bush may grow to 20 feet as a small tree, yet remains densely leafy and elegant in form.

Foliage and bloom can be used in making striking floral arrangements.

Silk tassel bush does best in a sunny location, with good drainage, and warm soil. Male plants are preferred, but be sure to include females in naturalized settings for ongoing self-sowing and fruit production for wildlife.

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Native Plant of the Month

Slough Sedge
Carex obnupta

• Slough sedge is a grass-like plant that grows in wet meadows and standing water as found in “sloughs” and wetlands.
• This plant is usually submerged in late winter when amphibians, such as the red-legged frog and salamanders, attach their egg masses to the stems.
• The large crop of seeds produced is important food for dozens of bird species.
• The new growth in spring is browsed by many animals and leaves are used in nests.
• Coastal native people continue to use the leaves for fine traditional baskets.

Landscape Value

Slough sedge is a perennial evergreen plant that forms attractive clumps of dark green foliage with interesting flower spikes from spring through summer.

Easily grown in full sun to part shade, slough sedge prefers a wet location, and will also thrive in a landscape setting with rich soil and occasional water. It will self-sow easily from seed.

There are many other species of sedges that have ornamental value and will tolerate a wide range of landscape settings including: Dewey’s, Fox, and Henderson’s sedge. Plant with camas, lupine, red osier dogwood, and wild rose.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Native Plant of the Month

Snowberry
Symphoricarpos albus

• The white, waxy berries form in early fall and persist into winter giving this plant its common name.
• The berry is considered to be a famine food for birds who rely on it in late winter, if other food is scarce.
• This plant forms thickets which provide important habitat for small birds, insects, and other small animals.
• This berry is not edible and is somewhat toxic to humans.

Landscape Value

Snowberry is an excellent landscape plant with its arching form, attractive, deciduous foliage, winter berries, and wide adaptability.

It forms solid masses, and spreads by underground runners, so give it room to grow. It provides a nice backdrop and mixes well with select native woodland shrubs such as wild rose, evergreen huckleberry, red osier dogwood, beaked hazelnut, oceanspray, and mock orange.

Plant in sun or partial shade with moist rich soil, and it will thrive, though it is gracefully adaptable to less ideal situations.
Native Plant of the Month

Swamp Lantern or Skunk Cabbage
*Lysichiton americanus*

- This plant emits a chemical which heats the soil, allowing it to emerge in early spring. This, along with the shape of its bright yellow flower stalk, leads to its common name, swamp lantern.
- The flower arrives before bees and butterflies, so it emits a strong odor that attracts carrion beetles and blowflies as pollinators, hence its other common name.
- The large waxy leaves were used by native people for gathering, preparing, and storing food, much like we use wax paper today.

**Landscape Value**
Swamp lantern is an "obligate" wetland plant which indicates the presence of wetlands with associated hydrology and soils. This is an attractive and exotic plant to include in the wetland landscape. It thrives in wetland forest and bog plantings, and is especially attractive along pond edges and in forest glens. They can be planted *en masse* or as individuals with lady fern, slough sedge, Pacific water parsley, and moss-covered nurse logs, and an over-story of Indian plum, salmonberry, red alder, red cedar, Sitka spruce, and other wetland plants.

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Native Plant of the Month

Sweet Gale
Myrica gale

• This wetland and bog-loving plant has sweet scented foliage.
• Sweet gale is important ecologically as it fixes nitrogen in the soil, nourishing other plants that follow in the natural succession.
• There are several species of native Myrica species in North America. Their fruits provide winter food for birds.
• The waxy fruits of Myrica have been used as a form of wax for centuries.
• Its local native name “monkey bush” implies that “Sasquatch” also used this plant in some way.

Landscape Value

Sweet gale is not a common ornamental. However, this low, deciduous shrub, with aromatic foliage and yellow flower clusters in spring, is a choice addition to a wetland bog landscape. Bogs and fens were once a common occurrence in our region. They are noted for their highly acidic soil and rich humus content, primarily from sedge or peat moss accumulating over centuries. Bogs can be created in landscapes for interest (refer to pond-building literature).

Companion plants could include Labrador tea, bog rosemary, douglas spirea, sundew, cotton grass, shooting star, bog asphodel, many sedges, and mosses.

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Native Plant of the Month

Thimbleberry

**Rubus parviflorus**

- The deep red berries of summer are thin-walled with a hollow center, and shaped like a thimble, explaining its common name.
- Thimbleberry will typically form thickets which are prime habitat for wildlife, providing cover, nesting sites, and food for birds and small mammals.
- The berries are edible, though a bit on the seedy and dry side, and good as a trail snack. Be sure to leave plenty for the wildlife who depend on them.
- The leaves are sometimes referred to as “nature wipes” for their softness.

**Landscape Value**

Thimbleberries are covered with large, white, rose-shaped flowers in spring, and put on a wonderful show when planted as a hedge or at the back of a border. The red berries in summer produce over a long period. The thornless zig-zag stems provide winter interest.

The soft maple-like leaves provide a backdrop of green in a naturalized planting where they can be planted in sunny forest edges or meadow clearings along with Indian plum, vine maple, oceanspray, red flowering currant, and groundcovers such as piggyback, fringecup and Pacific waterleaf.

Text by Heidi Bohan
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Trillium flowers change from white to purple as they age.

**Western Trillium**

*Also Western Wake-Robin*

*Trillium ovatum*

- The three petals, sepals, leaves and seedpod shape are reflected in the name “trillium” which means “in threes” in Latin.
- The flowers bloom at the time robins seem to ‘wake up’ in spring.
- Native children were cautioned not to pick the flower since it might bring rain, and current folklore suggests that the flower won’t return for seven years if picked.
- The seed is attractive to ants who carry it back to their nests, helping to disperse the seed throughout the forest.

**Landscape Value**

Trillium often grows in masses in the deep forest, where the flat spread of leaves makes maximum use of available sunlight. This makes it ideal for shady garden corners, and under the canopy of trees such as vine maple and cedar.

Trillium has become scarce in public areas because its early single bloom and small size makes this especially tempting to pick or transplant.

Plants can be purchased at native plant sales and nurseries. Mix with nurse logs and moss, and other delicate forest ground-covers such as inside-out flower, bleeding heart, corydalis, and wood sorrel.

Text by Heidi Bohan

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Native Plant of the Month

Native Wild Violets

Viola species

- The Pacific Northwest is home to many different native violet species. Most are found in moist forest understories.
- The flower shape and bright color invites our bumblebees and hummingbirds to share its sweet nectar in early spring.
- Violet flowers and leaves have a long history of human use for food and medicine.
- There are dozens of related non-native species familiar as ornamental plants in our gardens.

Landscape Value

Native wild violets provide a lovely groundcover that is easy to establish in the garden, especially in borders and forest understories. Underground rhizomes help this plant to spread throughout the garden.

Very low growing, it is best placed among rockery and nurselogs, and mixed with groundcover perennials such as fringedcup, deer fern, bleeding heart, Siberian miner’s-lettuce, enchanter’s nightshade and foamflower.

This is a tough little plant that will take the extremes of our climate with very little care, once established.

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Native Plant of the Month

Western Bog-Laurel
*Kalmia microphylla var. occidentalis*

- This is a plant of our bogs and fens, tolerating even the high acid soils of our peat bogs. The leaves are aromatic and similar in shape to true laurel (or bay) leaves. This provides its common name.
- Bog laurel contains unique compounds which lead to its use by native people for certain kinds of medicine.
- Uncommon in our region because of its specific soil and hydrology requirements, it can be found naturalized in forested lands with bogs and fens, which are dotted with its rose-purple flowers in spring.

Landscape Value

A small evergreen shrub with showy rose-purple flowers, bog-laurel is worth making room for in a wet bog garden along with Labrador tea, fool’s huckleberry, cotton grass, sundew, and other extraordinary native bog plants.

It is possible to create a bog in your landscape by placing a pond liner a foot or so below the soil line to collect and hold water, and filling with a low pH humus and rich soil.* Bogs are typically in open sunny areas surrounded by forest so consider placing your bog along the sunny edge of a forest or near small trees.

*See pond building literature to learn more.

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*Blooming plant in spring. Leaves are whitish underneath, distinguishing it from Labrador tea.*
Native Plant of the Month

Western Red Cedar
*Thuja plicata*

- The common name describes its cinnamon-red colored bark and wood.
- Distinctive “J”-shaped boughs provide dry shelter for many wildlife species.
- Porcupines, squirrels, and ravens use strips of its soft bark to line their nests.
- Known as the “Tree of Life,” native people used its wood for housing, canoes and carvings; its soft inner bark for clothing, blankets, and baskets; its branches for rope, incense, and medicine; and its roots for basketry.

To learn more, read *Cedar* by Hilary Stewart.

Landscape Value

This fragrant evergreen cedar is a graceful addition to the landscape. Western red cedar is slow growing, taking up to 100 years to mature. It is valued for its adaptability to a wide range of conditions: from sun to shade, wetlands to upland forests.

If planted closely together, red cedar can be used as a hedge or screen that can be groomed by pruning for height and width. Plant with vine maples, dogwoods, hazelnuts, and other small trees with an understory of ferns and woodland flowers for year round interest.

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Native Plant of the Month

Wood Sorrel

**Oxalis oregana**

- Lewis and Clark noted this plant in the woods of Oregon as being similar in taste to the Eurasian salad plant “sorrel,” with its tangy, tart taste. Hence, its common name, and part of its scientific (Oregon).
- Its high content of oxalic acid provides the rest of its scientific name.
- Deer and small herbivores dine on the leaves and flowers in small quantities, as oxalic acid is potentially harmful.
- The leaves will fold back sharply in direct sun, during the night, or in rainfall as an interesting, protective response.

**Landscape Value**

Wood sorrel is an excellent evergreen groundcover in the woodland garden. It needs to be placed correctly otherwise it may grow happily out of bounds.

It thrives in deep shade, and will tolerate dry summer conditions, so it is a prime candidate for the understory of existing trees and shrubs, or along the north side of buildings. It is best placed in areas bounded by walkways or other borders to keep it from spreading too far by underground rhizomes.

Flowers appear in spring and fall, and the new leaves and flowers are tasty additions to salads. Their oxalic acid is present in many foods, and is considered safe in small quantities.
Native Plant of the Month

Yarrow

Achillea millefolium

• "Achillea" owes its name to the Greek god Achilles. Yarrow is an ancient herbal remedy for stopping the flow of blood and is said to have been used to staunch the wound in Achilles’ heel.
• "Millefolium" is Latin for the “thousand leaves” that make up its fern-like leaf.
• The flower head is shaped like an umbrella (called an umbel), a perfect shape for butterflies that can easily land on this flat-topped flower head for nectar.
• The flowers have a sweet, unusual smell reminding us of its use as a medicinal herb.

Landscape Value

Yarrow is a well known perennial flower used in borders, containers, butterfly gardens, and naturalized meadows.

The native species is white-flowered, but cultivars are available in shades of yellow to purple and also serve as food for birds, butterflies, and bees.

Yarrow is a tough, self-sowing, deer-resistant, and drought-hardy plant that can be included with confidence in any sunny perennial border. Grow with other natives such as goldenrod, tufted hairgrass, penstemon, lupine, and bluebells.

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Native Plant of the Month

Yellow Marsh Marigold
*Caltha palustris* var. *asarifolia*

- “Caltha” comes from an early Greek name for a similar yellow-flowered plant; “palustris” comes from Latin for swampy, marshy.
- The word “marigold” comes from “Mary’s Gold,” a medieval name for a yellow daisy sacred to the Virgin Mary.
- A very early flowering plant that is found in bogs along the Northwest coast.
- Formerly part of an extensive willow plant community in swamps that covered Oregon and Washington lowlands, yellow marsh marigold is now greatly reduced.

Landscape Value

Yellow marsh marigolds are charming plants for the bog garden, with attractive succulent foliage and an early season buttercup flower.

Bog gardens need to be peaty, high acid (4.0 pH), and moist year-round. It is possible to create wetland bogs by using existing wet sites or by making artificial ponds using pond liners, and incorporating peat mix soils.

Yellow marsh marigold can be grown with other interesting bog and wetland plants such as bog birch, Labrador tea, cotton grass, marsh cinquefoil, shooting star, and bog rosemary.